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FINAL REPORT

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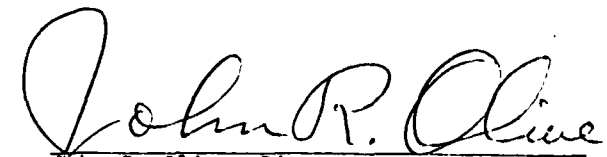
REPORT TITLE: The AIBS Shark Research Panel

AUTHOR: John R. Olive

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American Institute of Biological Sciences

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The AIBS Shark Research Panel was established on June 1958 to (1) expedite and activate recommendations formulated at the ONR sponsored conference on Basic Research Approaches to the Development of Shark Repellents and (2) to serve as a clearing house for all information related to the field of elasmobranch biology in general and the shark hazard problem in particular.

From 1958 to 1970 the Panel initiated or served in an advisory capacity in the following activities:

- (1) BASIC RESEARCH The Panel stimulated, activated, and coordinated basic investigations dealing with taxonomy, behavior, and functional anatomy of sharks, essential to the understanding of the shark hazard problem.
- (2) APPLIED RESEARCH With consultants, the Panel developed methods for testing and appraising the effectiveness of various anti-shark measures. As a result of several testing programs, meshing, shocking, and use of chemical and physical repellents are now in use throughout the world.
- (3) Maintenance of SHARK-ATTACK FILE A special form was prepared by the Panel for reliable documentation of shark attacks. These forms, completed by a physician or scientist in the area where the attack occurs, plus information concerning worldwide shark incidents from five different newspaper clipping services form the basis of the shark-attack file. From information of this type, the environmental conditions and the behavior patterns and activities of swimmers which provoke a shark to attack are studied.

The shark-attack file is maintained at the Mote Marine Laboratory and the information is being prepared for incorporation in a data retrieval system.

Analyses of shark attacks that took place during 1959 and 1960 were published by the Panel (Science, 132:323-326 and 134:87-88).

- (4) SERVICE The Panel has provided direct consultation to various government agencies and scientists concerning anti-shark devices. The increasing public demand for information on shark behavior and realistic evaluations of the shark hazard problem has also been met, by the Panel, collectively, or through efforts of its individual members by participation in the preparation of films, television and radio programs and by articles for publication in the popular press.
- (5) MEETINGS The Panel has had thirty-one executive meetings during the twelve year period. Periodically, symposia and conferences were organized dealing with various aspects of the biology of sharks. These meetings provided a forum for the exchange of scientific information on current research.
- (6) PUBLICATIONS Two major volumes and two sets of Abstracts resulted from papers presented at Panel Symposia and open meetings:
 - (a) Sharks and Survival, edited by Perry W. Gilbert, D. C. Heath and Company, 1963.
 - (b) Sharks, Skates, and Rays, edited by Perry W. Gilbert, Robert F. Mathewson, and David P. Rall. The Johns Hopkins Press, 1967.
 - (c) Abstracts of Current Investigations in the United States Dealing With Elasmobranch Fishes, The AIBS Shark Research Panel, 1968.
 - (d) ABSTRACTS: Current Investigations Dealing With Elasmobranch Fishes, The AIBS Shark Research Panel, 1970.

The final meeting of the AIBS Shark Research Panel was held in January 1970. The Panel and their consultants recommended the formation of a new expanded advisory

group: The Panel on Hazardous Marine Biological Phenomena. This new Panel would identify, consolidate and freely provide rapid authoritative information and/or recommendations on marine problems caused by disasters and catastrophies or by hazardous flora and fauna. The 'umbrella' Panel would be composed of three Subcommittees: I. Venomous and Poisonous Marine Animals II. Unusual Marine Phenomena III. Sharks and Other Predacious Marine Animals.

Members of the AIBS Shark Research Panel:

Dr. Perry W. Gilbert, Chairman, Mote Marine Laboratory

Captain H. David Baldrige, Mote Marine Laboratory, Naval Aerospace Medical Center

Dr. Sidney R. Galler, Smithsonian Institution

Dr. John R. Olive, American Institute of Biological Sciences

Mr. Stewart Springer, U. S. National Museum

Dr. Albert L. Tester, University of Hawaii

Dr. Leonard P. Schultz, Member Emeritus

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13. ABSTRACT The AIBS Shark Research Panel, established in 1958 to expedite and activate recommendations formulated at the ONR Conference: Basic Research Approaches for Development of Shark Repellents, serves as a clearing house for information related to elasmobranch biology and the shark hazard problem. The Panel initiated or served in an advisory capacity in the following activities: (1) <u>BASIC RESEARCH</u> -The Panel activated and coordinated investigations dealing with taxonomy, behavior, and functional anatomy of sharks (2) <u>APPLIED RESEARCH</u> -With consultants, the Panel developed methods for testing and appraising the effectiveness of anti-shark measures (3) <u>SHARK ATTACK FILE</u> -Documented shark attacks, compiled & maintained at the Mote Marine Laboratory, are being incorporated into a data retrieval system (4) <u>SERVICE</u> -Consultation has been provided to agencies, scientists, and the general public (5) <u>MEETINGS</u> -In addition to 31 executive sessions during the 12 year period, symposia and conferences provided forums for exchange of scientific information (6) <u>PUBLICATIONS</u> -(a) <u>Sharks and Survival</u> edited by P.W. Gilbert, D. C. Heath & Co., 1963 (b) <u>Sharks, Skates and Rays</u> edited by P.W. Gilbert, F. Mathewson, & D.P. Rall, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1967 (c) <u>Abstracts of Current Investigations Dealing With Elasmobranch Fishes</u> , AIBS, 1968 and 1970. At the final meeting, January 1970, the Panel and consultants recommended the formation of a new expanded advisory group: The Panel on Hazardous Marine Biological Phenomena, which would identify, consolidate and provide rapid authoritative information and/or recommendations on marine problems caused by disasters and catastrophies or by hazardous flora and fauna. The 'umbrella' panel would be composed of 3 Subcommittees: I. Venomous and Poisonous Marine Animals II. Unusual Marine Phenomena III. Sharks and Other Predacious Marine Animals.			

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